

Testimony for Appropriation Committee Hearing for Monday, 03/02/2015, 6:30pm concerning reinstatement of Tax Abatement Funding to nonprofits and low income housing.

Interfaith Homes, Project Number 011-TA-1-41
Wintonbury II, Project Number 011-TA-2-40

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Ezra Gelb. It is an honor to stand before you this evening. Thank you for the opportunity to express to each of you the vital need for Tax Abatement Funding to be restored in the Governor's proposed budget. I am grateful to serve the residents of Interfaith Homes & Wintonbury Park II with our dedicated and devoted team.

We cherish the residents of Interfaith Homes & Wintonbury II who inspire and motivate us. This nonprofit organization provides affordable and beautiful housing to these wonderful citizens of CT who call Bloomfield their home. These residents, our greatest generation, have bravely protected this country serving in the armed forces, educated our children and with love, care and wisdom have raised our current leaders ensuring our future. They are not seeking recognition for their lifetime of sacrifices and good deeds. These special people are only asking for a safe, affordable, pleasant place to call home.

Affordable housing is possible only through programs such as the State of CT Tax Abatement Funding that up until now, our State has sustained. Without this program, residents will likely be directly impacted by such a cut causing hardship to these residents with lower income.

Costs are challenging in nonprofit housing and funding can be precarious. Removal of the State of CT Tax Abatement Funding will prevent these nonprofits from operating properly. A resulting rent increase would likely be needed.

The residents at Interfaith Homes & Wintonbury II, with an average age of 80, are living on fixed incomes. They depend on the Tax Abatement Grant to provide much needed affordable housing. If State Funding is not restored, the difference will need to be made up by a rent increase. Rents may rise by as much as \$79 per month at Wintonbury II and as much as \$99 per month at Interfaith Homes.

The residents of Interfaith Homes & Wintonbury II look to you, the Appropriations Members who serve in good faith to protect CT residents in need. Please restore the Tax Abatement Grant. Please help these deserving and exceptional individuals. Please allow them to live in a respectful and dignified manner. Thank you.